

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this application as amended. Claims 1-42 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 6, 7, 13, 15, 17, 18, 21, 22, 28, 36, 37, and 42 have been amended. Claim 30 has been canceled without prejudice.

The Examiner objected to claims 36 and 37 for minor informalities. Accordingly, Applicants have amended claims 36 and 37 to overcome the objections. The Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the objections.

Applicants have amended claims 1, 6, 7, 13, 15, 18, 22, and 28 without introducing any new matter. Applicants have amended claim 1 to replace the capitalized "Originating" with "originating" to correct a typing error. Claims 6, 7, 13, 15, 18, 22, and 28 have been amended to add a period "." at the end of each claim to correct typing errors. The amendments are not made for reasons of patentability. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to enter the amendments.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-10, 17-19, 21-22, 31-35, 37, and 41 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by James, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,841,989; hereinafter "James"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections.

Claim 1 teaches a method of communicating between functional blocks that includes **decoding** the packet. Applicants respectfully submit that James does not disclose decoding a packet. According to James, a consumer **recognizes** and **removes** the packet and **substitutes** a smaller acknowledge packet in its place, addressed to the original producer (James, col. 2, lines 12-14; emphasis added). Applicants respectfully submit that recognizing a packet, removing the packet, and substituting the packet with another packet are distinct and separate from decoding the packet. James does not disclose decoding a packet. The producer sending a packet to the consumer does not imply that the consumer decodes the request packet. Furthermore, receiving a packet in James does not involve decoding the packet. According to James, the consumer recognizes the packet by **comparing** the target ID value in a packet with the ID of the

consumer (James, col. 5, lines 56-59; emphasis added), not decoding the packet. James does not disclose that the consumer decodes the packet received. Therefore, James does not anticipate claim 1 for at least this reason. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection.

Claims 2-10 depend, directly and indirectly, from claim 1. Therefore, James does not anticipate claims 2-10 for at least the reason discussed above with respect to claim 1. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejections.

Applicants respectfully submit that claim 17 teaches a first target and a second target, each including a control that comprises a **decoder**. For the reason discussed above with respect to claim 1, James does not disclose decoding a packet, and thus, James does not disclose a decoder. Therefore, James does not anticipate claim 17 for at least this reason. The Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the rejection. (1)

Claims 18-19 depend, directly and indirectly, from claim 17. Therefore, James does not anticipate claims 18-19 for at least the reason discussed above with respect to claim 17. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejections.

Claim 21 teaches a **ring** comprising a **packet valid line** configured to indicate whether a valid packet is being transmitted on the ring. The Examiner admitted that James does not disclose a ring comprising a packet valid line configured to indicate whether a valid packet is being transmitted on the ring (Office Action, p. 13, section 7). Therefore, James does not anticipate claim 21 for at least this reason. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection under §102(e). (2)

Furthermore, the Examiner cited Christiansen et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,983,302; hereinafter "Christiansen") and PCI Local Bus Specification to argue that Christiansen discloses a PCI local bus for transmitting data between requesting devices and it is inherent that the PCI local bus has a packet valid line configured to indicate whether a valid packet is being transmitted on the ring (FRAME# line) (Office Action, p. 13, section 7). It is respectfully submitted that claim 21 teaches a ring, but Christiansen and

PCI Local Bus Specification are directed to only the PCI local bus. An inherent part of the PCI local bus is not necessarily an inherent part of the ring. Furthermore, "FRAME#" pin in PCI Local Bus Specification merely indicates the duration of data transfer, and therefore, is irrelevant to the validity of data packets (PCI Local Bus Specification, p. 10, section 2.2.3). Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's finding of inherency and demand the Examiner to cite to supporting references.

Applicants respectfully submit that claims 22, 31-35, 37, and 41 depend, directly and indirectly, from claim 21. Therefore, James does not anticipate claims 22, 31-35, 37, and 41 for at least the reason discussed above with respect to claim 21. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejections.

The Examiner rejected claim 42 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Szczepanek (U.S. Patent No. 5,374,926, hereinafter, "Szczepanek"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. Claim 42 as amended teaches a ring comprising a packet valid line configured to indicate whether a valid packet is being transmitted on the ring. In contrast, Szczepanek does not disclose a packet valid line. Szczepanek discloses an input line and an output line at the ring interface without providing any detail (Szczepanek, col. 7, lines 9-20; Figure 2). Therefore, claim 42 as amended is not anticipated by Szczepanek. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection.

The Examiner rejected claims 20, and 38-40 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over James. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 20 and 38-40 are patentable over James for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claims 17 and 21 respectively. Since it is unnecessary to discuss other reasons supporting the patentability of claims 20, and 38-40, they are not discussed here. However, Applicants reserve the right to raise these reasons in the future. The Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the rejections.

The Examiner rejected claims 11-16, 23-25, and 27-29 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over James in view of Christiansen. For the reasons discussed above with respect to claims 1 and 17, James does not disclose decoding a packet or a decoder. In addition, for the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 21, James does not disclose a ring comprising a packet valid line. Christiansen fails to make up for the deficiencies of James. Therefore, the combination of James and Christiansen does not disclose every limitation in each of claims 11-16, 23-25, and 27-29. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 11-16, 23-25, and 27-29 are patentable over James and Christiansen for at least this reason. Since it is unnecessary to discuss other reasons supporting the patentability of claims 11-16, 23-25, and 27-29, they are not discussed here. However, Applicants reserve the right to raise these reasons in the future. The Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the rejections.

The Examiner rejected claim 26 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over James in view of Christiansen, and further in view of Desyllas et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,697,268; hereinafter "Desyllas"). For the reason discussed above with respect to claim 21, James does not disclose a ring comprising a packet valid line. Christiansen and Desyllas fail to make up for the deficiencies of James. Therefore, the combination of James, Christiansen, and Desyllas does not disclose every limitation in claim 26. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 11-16, 23-25, and 27-29 are patentable over James, Christiansen, and Desyllas for at least this reason. The Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the rejections.

Furthermore, claim 26 teaches that the first direction and the second direction dynamically alterable. In contrast, Desyllas does not disclose that the first direction and the second direction are dynamically alterable. However, the Examiner argued that:

... wherein bus request/grant lines are bi-directional lines for carrying request and grant signals in opposite direction, this *implies* that opposite directions are dynamically alterable since the lines are bi-directional lines.

(Office Action, p. 13, the first paragraph; emphasis added).

Applicants respectfully submit that the directions of the bi-directional request and grant lines are not necessarily dynamically alterable because a line can be bi-directional without being dynamically alterable. Therefore, one cannot imply the opposite directions are dynamically alterable from the fact that the lines are bi-directional. In fact, Desyllas merely discloses when one of the other units (SC, DC, or ING) requests to use the bus, the unit sends a request to the OCP on one of the request/grant lines, and the OCP grants permission when the bus becomes free (Desyllas, col. 2, lines 48-53). Desyllas does not mention anything about dynamically altering the direction of the request and grant lines. Therefore, Desyllas does not disclose the limitation of dynamically alterable directions. Moreover, neither James nor Christiansen makes up for the deficiencies of Desyllas, and thus, the combination of James, Christiansen, and Desyllas does not include every element of claim 26. In view of this, Applicants submit that the present invention as claimed in claim 26 is not obvious in view of the combination of James, Christiansen, and Desyllas. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection under §103(a).

The Examiner rejected claim 36 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over James, in view of Hartmann et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,047,002). For the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 21, James does not disclose a ring comprising a packet valid line. Hartmann fails to make up for the deficiencies of James. Therefore, a combination of James and Hartmann does not disclose every limitation in claim 36. Applicants respectfully submit that claim 36 is patentable over James and Hartmann for at least this reason. Since it is unnecessary to discuss other reasons supporting the patentability of claim 36, they are not discussed in the current response. However, Applicants reserve the right to raise these reasons in the future. The Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the rejections.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§102(b), (e), and §103(a) have been overcome by the amendments and the remarks and withdrawal of these rejections is respectfully requested. Applicants submit that claims 1-29 and 31-42 as amended are now in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited.

Please charge any shortages and credit any overcharges to our Deposit Account No. 02-2666.

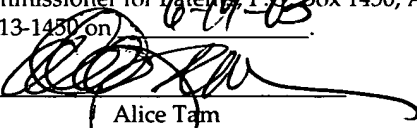
Respectfully submitted,
BLAKELY, SOKOLOFF, TAYLOR & ZAFMAN LLP

Dated: 6/19, 2003


Chui-kiu Teresa Wong
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No. 48,042

12400 Wilshire Boulevard
Seventh Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90025-1026
(408) 720-8300

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail with sufficient postage in an envelope addressed to the Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on 6-19-03.


Alice Tam